

3 Ways to Prevent Burnout and Still Burn for God

I hit a milestone birthday recently. I'll let you guess the number. How time flies. (Just saying that means I must be getting old.)

It's good to be aware of the shortness of time. Let's face it—at any moment, our work on earth could come to an abrupt end. Here are three ways to prevent burnout and still burn for God:

1. Assess the true value your time. Because it's a limited commodity, time has enormous value. That's why, throughout history, mankind has had an obsession with discovering and building better time-saving tools.

Recognizing the true value of time should make us thrifty in the way we spend it. That's why Paul tells us to “redeem the time” (Eph. 5:16; “make the most of every opportunity” in the NIV).

2. Stop doing un-commanded works. So, should we say yes to every opportunity that comes our way? No! Paul says in the very next verse: “Understand what the Lord's will is.” We should actually say no to many things—things that are not on God's “to do” list.

Paul says earlier in the same letter, “For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them” (Eph. 2:10). The fast lane to burnout is to take on un-commanded works—things that God designed for *others* to do, but not us.

Being productive in the kingdom has more to do with working *smart* than working *hard*. Working smart means knowing exactly which opportunities are from the Lord and which are not.

Our heavenly boss is less impressed with our busyness than our faithfulness—to do only those things *He* has prepared for us to do.

3. Get up and go. While some of us need to stop doing un-commanded works, others may have the opposite problem: They need get up and go. In Ephesians 5:14, Paul says, “Wake up O sleeper, rise from the dead.” The best way to make your dreams come true is to wake up! Too many of us are daydreamers—thinking fondly of great things we will do one day, but that day never seems to arrive. The preacher George Truett once said, “To know the will of God is the greatest knowledge, to find the will of God is the greatest discovery, and to do the will of God is the greatest achievement.”

Time is a precious commodity, so let's not waste a drop. Let's not be caught sleeping on the job when the boss returns. And may He not find us burning the *wrong* candle at both ends.

“Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and the Messiah will shine on you. Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.” —Ephesians 5:14-17

Are there some disciplines you've developed that have enabled you to be a better steward of the time God has given you? I'd love to learn from you. Please share your comments.

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